

Newsletter No. 10, July 14, 2009

Swiss Experiment science project approved

In its meeting of June 10, 2009, based on a recommendation by the ETH Zurich research commission, the CCES Steering Board approved CHF 400'000 for the Swiss Experiment science project for two years. The financial means for this activity had been reserved by the Steering Board when approving the Swiss Experiment research platform in 2008. The science part of the Swiss Experiment complements the infrastructure project by contributing to a better understanding of land-atmosphere interactions in the mountains and – based on this – an improved warning from hydrological hazards.

Research highlights: MAIOLICA – lake methane efflux measurements

Methane is the most important greenhouse gas after CO₂. One open question is the role of lakes and other wetlands as sources of methane. Some experts expect them to be hot spots with a significant contribution despite the small area covered by such ecosystems. To address this question the methane fluxes from two lakes were measured in close collaboration between Eawag and ETH as part of the MAIOLICA project (**M**odelling and exper**I**ments on **L**and surface **I**nteractions with atmospheric **C**hemistry and climate, www.cces.ethz.ch/projects/clench/maiolica). The eddy covariance flux measurements of methane during lake mixing/turnover are among the very first worldwide, and are backed up by standard methods such as floating chamber measurements and indirect quantification of fluxes from concentration profiles taken in the lake water several times a week. Preliminary results indicate that methane production in lakes can be relevant, but most of the gas is oxidized to CO₂ before it escapes the lake.



Methane flux sensors being attached to a buoy on Rotsee. © W. Eugster, ETH Zurich

From Outreach to Partnership: Defining the Role of Universities in Achieving Sustainability – workshop at ETH Zurich, October 15 and 16, 2009

In process of societal change towards sustainability, universities will have to play a more prominent role in the future. A joint workshop of the Alliance for Global Sustainability (www.theags.org/), ETH Sustainability (www.sustainability.ethz.ch/) and CCES at ETH Zurich on October 15 to 16, 2009 aims at identifying how university researchers can contribute most effectively to achieving sustainability. The program will be composed of keynotes by prominent speakers, a panel discussion with high level ETH representatives and external partners, and small working groups. A set of recommendations and best practices for researchers is expected as a result of the workshop. More information is available at www.ags.ethz.ch/news/. The workshop will be limited to 80 participants. Participation is free. Register your interest at www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=feBILVkXUMD0YAEqBNX63g_3d_3d before September 15, 2009.

Risk, Rare Events and Extremes – a series of events at EPF Lausanne

Improving the predictability of natural hazards is the overall goal of the CCES focal area Natural Hazards and Risks (ERU HazRi, www.cces.ethz.ch/projects/hazri/). In the HazRi project EXTREMES (www.cces.ethz.ch/projects/hazri/EXTREMES), scientists from a variety of disciplines are working together to improve the understanding of and modeling for extreme environmental events. A series of workshops and a final conference on that issue, co-organized by Prof. Anthony Davison, Principal Investigator of EXTREMES, will take place in the coming months at ETH Lausanne. For more information and registration, see <http://extremes.epfl.ch/>.

Research in Environment and Sustainability – Insights and Conclusions – CCES Latsis Symposium 2010 at ETH Zurich

For the second time after 2007, the Latsis Foundation is supporting the organization of a Latsis Symposium by CCES at ETH Zurich. The three-day symposium 'Research in Environment and Sustainability – Insights and Conclusions' will present highlights from five thematic research areas of CCES of the past four years and discuss main conclusions for various stakeholder groups. The symposium will take place either in the last week of October or mid-November 2010. The definite date and further information will be provided before the end of 2009.

For more information on the CCES visit our website www.cces.ethz.ch/ or contact the CCES office.

Details on events are available on the News & Events site www.cces.ethz.ch/news/.

All events are open to the public unless otherwise stated.

Earlier editions of the Newsletter are available at <http://www.cces.ethz.ch/downloads/newsletter>.

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